

PRIORITY
FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

UNCLASSIFIED

(Security Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

745h.00/8-2751

FROM : AMCONSUL, LAGOS, NIGERIA NEA 104

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

REF : 1951 SEP 12 AM 9 12

58 For-Dept.	ACTION NEA	DEPT. REP DCR OLI IE UNA
Use Only ik	REC'D SEPT. 3	OTHER AG COMM ECA FRB LAB NSRB TAR DPA

SUBJECT: Fortnightly Review - August 12-25, 1951

POLITICAL

Convening of Legislative Council

By far the most important event of the period reported upon herein was the convening of the 5th Session of the Legislative Council in Lagos, which was opened with the usual pomp and pageantry, by the Governor. It was attended by the Consul General. This will be the last session of the Council under the old constitution. Nothing of special importance occurred in the Council during the period covered by this report.

The Elections

The elections have been on in earnest and political parties, the country over, and their candidates, have promised everything under the sun if elected. There undoubtedly is much interest by nationalists in all of Africa as to progress in Nigeria where the people are looking toward greater self-government under the new constitution. A Colonial Office spokesman expressed the hope that the primary and intermediate elections could be completed in time for the new Regional legislatures to meet before the end of the year, and the new Central Legislature (House of Representatives) in January, 1952.

Although both of the principal parties have claimed sweeping victories in the primary elections, it is difficult indeed to determine just who is right, the reason being that many candidates for office do not previously announce their party affiliations.

The Government spent considerable money in advertising the electoral procedure, under the new constitution, but has been fairly silent as to election results thus far. Zik's press has strongly criticized the fact that little has been published by Government, thus allowing the elections to continue without any seeming interest. The Government has defended its silence, stating as its reason that little reliable data is yet available.

AWChilds:mos

UNCLASSIFIED

ACTION COPY - DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

745 H.00/8-2751

RMC

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

2 Lagos 104

Primary elections in the Eastern Region seem to have been conspicuous for the absence of political party influence.

Although general polling was quite heavy in the Western Region at the primary elections, thousands of voters were turned back for not being in possession of income tax receipts. Tax evasion is reported to be rife throughout the country.

The most interesting development of such elections, held August 13, 1951, was the victory of several candidates from the Ibadan People's Party, which is only a local organization. It has not joined NCNC but is believed to sympathize largely with the latter's aims.

In general the elections appear to have been conducted in a way which reflects credit on the organizing ability of the electoral officers.

Nduka Eze

After having been tried and found guilty of minor offences of late, Nduka EZE, pro-communist labor leader, must shortly answer the charge "intent to fraud". This grew out of alleged receipt by him, from a student, of £300, and alleged unlawful use of the money. His case is scheduled to be heard again soon.

Alleged Political Activities of Churches

Allegations of political activities on the part of the Catholic Church in Nigeria continue, particularly in the papers of the NCNC. For the first time names, places and dates of the alleged activities have been specified. These accusations have in some instances been used as a basis of departure for general attacks on "foreign" religions in general, and the Catholic Church in particular. However, no one seems to be paying much attention to the charges.

ECONOMIC

Weather Crops and Prices

In July, although rainfall was, in general, a little below average, weather conditions were favorable to crops.

Statement of Financial Secretary re Wages, Prices, etc.

The Acting Financial Secretary presented a paper to the

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Classification

3

Lagos

104

Legislative Council on controlling inflation. He insisted upon every effort being made to keep wages from rising and assured the members that except at the very lowest scale the Government had no intention of granting any general increases to Civil Servants. In addition it would be the policy of the Government to hold increases in Marketing Board prices to a minimum. Finally export duties would be raised where necessary to squeeze out inflationary purchasing power. Partly as a result of these steps and partly as a result of good weather this year food prices in June were generally lower than those of a year ago.

Cocoa Producers Prices Increased

Cocoa producers' prices for the 1951/52 purchasing season, which commences at midnight September 20/21 in the Western Provinces, and September 6/7 in the Eastern Provinces, have been increased by £50 per ton across the board. The Nigerian Cocoa Marketing Board could probably pay more, but has taken into consideration the probable economic consequences of a greater increase in cocoa farmers' purchasing power. The foregoing decision may cause price increases on local foodstuffs, as well as on imported goods in view of the increasingly tight supply situation as respects both local and imported goods. There has, however, been considerable elation in the cocoa growing areas as a result of the price increases.

Cocoa Farmers to Receive Compensation

The Nigeria Cocoa Marketing Board has recently announced that it will increase remuneration for diseased cocoa trees cut out by farmers from 2 shillings to 4 shillings per tree. In addition £0-2-6 per tree will be paid three years after the planting of any new trees replacing diseased plants. The new plants will be supplied by the Department of Agriculture free of charge. Where farms are found to be unsuitable for cocoa, after cutting out, farmers will be assisted in planting in a new and more suitable area if such available land can be found. If not, they will be assisted in converting their present land to other uses. If farmers do not wish to replant outside of their own farm or no space can be found, alternative types of plants will be supplied and after three years £0-2-6 per plant cut will be paid. In the latter case there is a limit of £75-0-0 per acre on remuneration. This new policy will no doubt use up a considerable part of the profit which the Board makes over and above producer prices. It should also be more effective than the previous system in combatting black pod and swollen shoot diseases.

Cocoa Purchases by U.K.

During the first half of 1951, United Kingdom bought West

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Classification...

4 Lagos 104

African cocoa valued at £23,500,000, compared with £15,000,000 in the same period of last year. Of the former figure, £14,000,000 worth came from the Gold Coast and the balance from Nigeria.

New Plan to Expand Electricity Production

The Electricity Corporation of Nigeria has announced that it plans to spend £6,000,000 to complete the first part of a scheme to bring electricity to 10,000,000 people within the next few years. This involves the construction, at Mamu, of a new power plant to consist of two 30,000 kilowatt sets, and a 220,000 volt transmission line. The chairman of the corporation stated that he hoped to place orders for machinery within 12 months, that delivery would require 3 years, that erection would take 2 years, and that the machinery would be purchased in Great Britain and in the United States. The power station is to be built at Mamu because the latter is near the Enugu collieries. There are also being explored the possibility of hydroelectric power development at several other points.

The Mamu scheme is said to be by far the most ambitious Electricity Corporation undertaking attempted in Nigeria, and it is believed that the planned new construction will contribute considerably to more rapid economic and industrial progress in Nigeria.

Pilot Canning Factory Being Constructed

There is being built in Ibadan a pilot factory for canning fruits, vegetables and meats. The factory is the result of tests carried out in the experimental cannery financed by the Colonial Development Board controlled by the Department of Commerce and Industries. Among other things the factory is intended to absorb the large surplus of grapefruit that goes to waste annually around Ibadan. The primary purpose of the scheme is to supply more food for Nigerian consumption.

Agricultural Progress in Nigeria

A report published in London in August, entitled "Colonial Research for 1950-51", surveys, inter alia, progress in improving Nigerian agriculture.

The spread of the use of super-phosphate fertilizer continues, generally bringing groundnut crop increases of 200 to 400 lbs. per acre by the use of only 60 lbs. of fertilizer. There is a further residual effect persisting up to four years. Increased quantities of fertilizer are to be made available to farmers during the next few years as this is thought to be the most practicable and sure-fire measure to increase agricultural output, particularly for

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

5 Lagos 104

groundnuts and guinea corn.

Annual Report of Development Board

The Western Regional Development Board shows in its 1950-51 annual report that it approved loans totalling £91,405, those for agriculture forming the larger proportion. The period of repayment ranged between 2 and 12 years, and the beneficiaries totalled 32. Loans to industry included funds for a tire re-treading plant, footwear factory, teak plantation, saw-mill and farm implement factory. (Copies will be sent Department).

Economic Problems to be Discussed

It was announced in the House of Commons that the colonies are to be represented at a Commonwealth Conference later in the year to consider problems connected with the production and supply of raw materials and manufactured goods. This is because of the need to increase production of raw materials in the commonwealth.

LABOR

Marine Strike Averted

On August 13, 1951, the Nigerian Marine Workers Union threatened a "down tools" strike in protest against the Government's refusal to accept certain recommendations following conciliation meetings between the Union and the Director of Marine, presided over by a representative of the Labor Department. No date for the beginning of the strike was fixed. The Government indicated that it was not prepared to conciliate on points which had not been discussed in conciliation meetings, while the Union demanded assurance that agreements already reached would be approved by Government (the Civil Service Commissioner) before proceeding on to further points still in dispute. There were no especially important issues involved.

On August 15, 1951, the marine workers staged a "slow down" strike at 1:00 p.m. but at 2:00 p.m. agreed to call it off pending a further interview with the Civil Service Commissioner on August 17, 1951. At that meeting most of the points in dispute were resolved, with other points to be discussed at a lower level with the Director of Marine. The struggle now appears to be ended.

Pay Increases and Adjustments Requested

In mid-August the Central Executive of the Nigerian Civil Servants Union addressed memorandums to the Governor and to the

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Classification

6 Lagos 104

Civil Service Commissioner touching on following points:

(1) Request for a 7½% increase in pay rates due to the rising cost of living, (2) Adjustments to lessen the gap between the salaries of Junior and Senior officers in the Service, (3) The African Staff Housing Scheme and (4) Discussion of the current negotiation machinery for settlement of labor disputes. No reply has yet been made directly. However, the speech of Mr. Baker-Beall, Acting Financial Secretary, in the Legislative Council on August 24, rejected any overall wage increases.

Protest Against Increase in Expatriate Personnel

Pressure to minimize the number of Civil Service expatriates in Nigeria continues. Latest example is the protest by the Nigerian Railway Civil Service against the importation of four Europeans to fill responsible positions in the Department when competent Nigerian personnel were supposedly available for the post.

Deteriorating Labor Relations

In last report it was mentioned that the management of the Nigerian Railway had been placed in a difficult position because Government (through the Labor Department and the Civil Service Commissioner) failed to ratify various items agreed between management and the workers. Now, a similar situation (strike of the marine workers, see above) has arisen over a conciliation agreement reached between the Director of the Marine Department and the workers' representatives. This brings up the broad issue of deteriorating labor relations.

Many feel that the Civil Service Commissioner should not be the final authority to determine industrial disputes, and he is often blamed for labor difficulties. Labor leaders are of the opinion that there should exist negotiating machinery on a national level where all disputes not settled between the unions, management, and the Labor Office should go finally rather than to the Civil Service Commissioner.

Labor points out that a solution to this problem must be found because otherwise the workers' faith in existing conciliation machinery will dissolve completely, the result being chaos.

OTHER

Further Developments Concerning Passports Reported Missing from the Lagos Immigration Office.

Two men were charged in Lagos on Saturday, August 4, 1951,

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

7 Lagos 104

with possession of forged passports; both pleaded not guilty. Both, however, were found guilty; one was fined £15, the other £10.

Investigations involving the general problem of passport security are continuing and allegedly one of the better CID investigators has been working on the case for some time, intimating a very thorough investigation. One constable, believed to have been in a responsible position in the Immigration Office, is reported to have disappeared shortly after the loss of a number of passports was first reported.

Visit of Nigerian Student Liaison Officer in U.S.A.

Mr. Reginald BARRETT, Liaison Officer for Nigerian students in U.S.A., has recently visited Nigeria. He consulted with Government and prospective students here concerning opportunities for students in U.S. and their general welfare there. He told the Africans that U.S. had much to offer especially as respects the training of technicians.

Lagos Mayor Remains in England

The Mayor of Lagos, Dr. Ibiyinka OLORUN-NIMBE, who went to U.K. to attend the Festival of Britain, is taking a course in local government before returning to Lagos.

Cost of Living Advancing

With the cost of living advancing, there is some clamor in the press for a program calculated to stay the advance. Price control has been considered on several occasions but has been rejected each time. It is reported that price controls on essential commodities are to be instituted on the Gold Coast.

Research Appointments Made

Two West Africans have been appointed to the research staff of the Department of Social Anthropology of Edinburgh University. One of these is from Nigeria.

Educational Mission for West Africa

Small groups of independent experts are due to visit British African territories to study the policy and practice of education in those territories. The group to visit West Africa includes 4 members, all British educational leaders.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

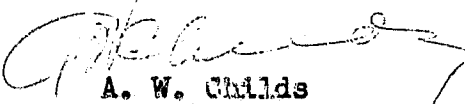
8 Lagos 104

Proposed Sponsorship of Nigerian Students in American Schools
by the African Academy of Arts and Research.

Mazi K. Ozuomba MBADIWE has announced the intention of his African Academy of Arts and Research to sponsor 10 more Nigerian students to American schools beginning in September of this year.

The scholarships announced thus far are one to Syracuse University and two at Simpson College, Iowa. The Academy is already sponsoring 26 Nigerian students in 9 American colleges and universities in the United States.

Criticism of the Academy and its President, Mr. Mbadiwe, continues in the local press as a consequence of the furor raised by the Academy's scholarship students at Lincoln University a few weeks ago. In view of the public interest generated by the announcement and of the big play the press has given the protesting scholars in the United States, this office will await with interest the financial arrangements to be proposed for these new 10 by Mr. Mbadiwe.


A. W. Childs
American Consul General

Copy to Embassy London

UNCLASSIFIED